

Message Text

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17

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

OMB-01 ACDA-07 AID-05 IGA-02 TRSE-00 MC-02 /087 W

----- 079883

R 020449Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8113

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

USCINCPAC

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, PK, IN, US

SUBJ: VIRTUAL SILENCE ON US ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN

1. ALTHOUGH THE NOTICE TO CONGRESS OF THE PROJECTED 84 MILLION DOLLAR ARMS SALE TO PAKISTAN WAS WIDELY REPORTED IN THE INDIAN PRESS, THERE HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY NO EDITORIAL COMMENT IN THE PRESS. THE TIMES OF INDIA MENTIONED IT IN ITS SEPTEMBER 1 EDITORIAL, BUT THE BURDEN OF THAT PIECE WAS A CRITICISM OF THE PROPOSED SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA AND IRAN. THE PAKISTAN ASPECT WAS LITERALLY MENTIONED ONLY IN PASSING. ONLY THE HINDI LANGUAGE DAILY HINDUSTHAN OF THE NUMEROUS PAPERS WE SEEN RAN A DISAPPROVING EDITORIAL. THE HINDUSTHAN ON SEPTEMBER 1 CONTENDED US ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN WOULD DEFEAT ATTEMPTS TO BRING PEACE TO SOUTH ASIA AND REPRESENTS A US-PAKISTAN CONSPIRACY.

2. WE FIND IT HARD TO ESCAPE THE CONCLUSION THAT THE GOI HAS NOT YET DECIDED HOW TO HANDLE THE MATTER FOR

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PUBLIC CONSUMPTION. ONE OR TWO MEA OFFICIALS IN PRIVATE

CONVERSATION WITH US ASSERTED THE TIMING MAY HAVE
AN ADVERSE AFFECT ON INDIAN PUBLIC OPINION SINCE THE
ANNOUNCEMENT COMES SO SOON AFTER THE REESTABLISHMENT
OF INDO-PAKISTAN DIPLOMATIC TIES AND A BURST OF
FAVORABLE COMMENT ABOUT PAKISTAN IN THE INDIAN PRESS.
WE HASTEN TO ADD THAT THIS IS NOT A GOI POSITION, AT
LAST AT THIS TIME AND MOST INDIANS ARE RELUCTANT TO
OFFER A CRITICAL OPINION AS A SEPTEL ON STAFFDEL
MANTEL WILL SUGGEST.

SAXBE

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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